Reviewer’s report

Title: Validation of a roadmap for mainstreaming nutrition-sensitive interventions at state level in Nigeria

Version: 1 Date: 23 Mar 2020

Reviewer: Rebecca Heidkamp

Reviewer's report:

The authors have made substantial revisions to the manuscript however as reviewer/reader I am still fundamentally struggling to identify the questions being addressed by this manuscript relating to the final review & validation t vs. the overall MINA project/study. It is challenging to provide specific feedback in light of this fundamental uncertainty. However I am proceeding under the assumption that it should only focus on validation stage.

Title

Since I understand this manuscript is only focused on the review & validation process consider changing the title to "validation of a roadmap for mainstreaming nutrition-sensitive interventions at state level in Nigeria"

Abstract

Abstract will need to be rewritten to reflect the specific focus of the article - once other changes are made. And to ensure that the abstract can be fully understood without reading the full article. (e.g. in current draft the authors make reference to "the roadmap" with no additional explanation for the reader)

Background

The Problem statement section (Lines 92-109) is actually a clearer background statement than the current background. Consider how they can be merged together.

- Since focus is on validation - background must justify why validation matters and/or what we do vs do not know about validation processes.
- What is the specific set of questions that you are trying to address in the validation process? Per lines 107-109 It says the aim is "to explore if the developed roadmap will function as intended once placed in the stakeholder's environments and to assess the roadmap's likelihood for success in mainstreaming nutrition initiatives in the states in Nigeria". So what series of more specific questions did you aim to answer?
- Need to be very clear what you mean by "this study" (e.g. line 105, 114) are you talking about the overall MINA work or the piece addressed by this manuscript (validation). Define early on and be very consistent with how you refer to it.

Methods

- Consider focusing only on the last 2 stages in the figure / lines 114-116 - development of validation tool & application of validation - because you suggest that you report on the other
phases in other places & the reporting of results for the "roadmap development" and "expert review" is quite limited/confusing.
- Line 118-122 and Figure - It is currently not clear whether these are all unique stakeholders / participants or if they same people participated across various phases.
  ○ Line 118 suggests that same experts reviewed roadmap & did tool development. However the roadmap is about Nigeria & the tool development was done in RSA. So how are these the same people???. Again recommend that only focus on the validation tool development & application.
- If recommendations are adopted lines 131-153 are not needed.
- Given focus on validation - provide more detail on the tool itself - the domains of validation(which appear to be presented in the results?) as well the Pre-testing of tool (lines 155-158)
- Lines 170-181: provide more details about validation tool. Did you allow quantitative & qualitative responses?
- Lines 196-197 - be more specific about this in methods. At what stage did you go back to the respondents to check the findings/conclusions?

Results (Line 215 should be "results" not "result)
- Suggest only report on validation participants. Table 2 is not needed. Can summarize in text.
- Remove 223-229 as these are not very meaningful to the reader without more detailed understanding and are not needed to understand the validation piece.
- If variation across state/context matters for the validation process, then present results by state
- Line 235 - Detail about name of file not needed

Discussion
- Generally the theme of discussion should be on the validation process - not the overall roadmap purposes/earlier phases nor specific contextual differences across states. If contextual differences in validation are a major theme then need to be explicit about this - and to present them in the results so they can be discussed here.
- Lines 338-340 - what is the evidence behind this statement? Is it because they scored things too highly?
- Line 341-345 - the purpose of the roadmap should be addressed in the background; the focus here should be on validation
- Line 344-345 is not clear. Is this responding to a critique of the roadmap identified during the validation?
- Lines 346-354 - if the contextual differences between the two states are a major finding here they need to be more clearly presented in the results

Conclusion
- Again reframe in light of primary focus of this manuscript being on validation - and implications of validation - not the overall roadmap process

Level of interest
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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